Shri Nandakumar: King of percussion in suburbs

Vaishnavi Prasad profiles this artiste, who has won critical acclaim, both in India and abroad

Vidhwan Shri Nandakumar is an 'A' grade artiste of All India Radio residing in Malad. Hailing from Ambalapuzha in Kerala, he started learning mridangam at the age of five, under the tutelage of Shri Kaithavana Madhavadas in the Gurukulavaasam tradition.

At a young age he won prizes at several competitions and national youth festivals and also accompanied leading artistes. In Mumbai, even as a teenager he has risen to fame through the display of pure talent and finesse in his performances and dedication to the cause of imparting knowledge. In fact, today, he is one of the most sought after mridangam teachers in Mumbai. Apart from being active in the regular concert scene, Shri Nandakumar is a regular featured artiste in both the All India Radio and Doordarshan.He is also the principal mridangam teacher at sabhaas in Mumbai such as the prestigious Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha, Music Triangle, Chembur Fine Arts and Nadaalaya. He is also proficient in playing other percussion instruments like Ghatam, Ganjira, Morsing, Konnakol and Thavil and trains many students in the same.

Honours and Awards

Music Triangle, a prominent organisation in Mumbai, conferred upon Shri Nandakumar the title Sruti Laya Sudhakara during their Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1998.

The title Gurushikamani was conferred on him by Padam

Vidhwan Shri Nandakumar

Apart from being regular at the concert scene, he has trained many teen-aged talents to perform at annual thala vadhya kutcheris (percussion based concerts) at the all India Radio level.

Shri Nandakumar also travels to the United States of America every year for 5-6 months and imparts his knowledge to eager NRIs and foreigners there. At the end of his annual workshop in the States, he travels to Zurich, where he has set up a centre for teaching mridangam nearly two years ago. Vidhwan Shri Nandakumar is the recipient of many awards and felicitations not only in India but abroad as well.